

BACKGROUND:

To: Interested Parties

From: The Office of Senator Joe Donnelly

Re: Update: Administration's Efforts to Undermine the Health Care System

Date: September 29, 2017

Top Updates

- On September 26, 2017, following the [announcement](#) that the latest partisan repeal legislation from Senators Graham and Cassidy did not have enough votes to pass, Senator Mitch McConnell indicated that Republicans would continue trying to repeal the health care law, injecting additional uncertainty into an already volatile insurance market. Faced with ongoing legislative uncertainty, consumers have little clarity on available health care options, and insurers must in turn charge higher rates or exit the market together.
- The Administration continues to create uncertainty by [refusing to commit](#) to making cost-sharing reduction (CSR) payments and [significantly](#) cutting outreach efforts, both of which are expected increase the cost of health insurance. Indiana's budget for health care navigators will be [reduced by 82 percent](#), which is the largest percent decrease of any state in the country.
- Despite uncertainty in the insurance markets, states like Indiana that use the federal healthcare.gov had to [sign contracts](#) and lock in insurance rates for 2018 by September 27th.
- CBO [reported](#) that Americans may be forced to pay significantly more for health care through the insurance market largely because of short-term of market uncertainty. CBO also projected that enrollment will be lower than expected, "because of announced reductions in federal advertising, outreach, the enrollment period, and other enrollment efforts and, in 2018, because of higher premiums resulting from insurers' uncertainty about federal funding of CSR payments."
- The Administration [announced](#) that it will shut down the healthcare.gov website for 12 hours every Sunday except one during the upcoming open enrollment period. Because many individuals use the weekend to compare plans and purchase insurance for the upcoming year, this decision could further impact enrollment numbers. The Administration said the closures will be for regular maintenance, but closures for maintenance in previous years were much shorter and less frequent.

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